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COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS
OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 199th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 26 July 1993, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. CISSE (Senegal)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. The agenda was adopted.

ELECTION OF A VICE-CHAIRMAN AND RAPPORTEUR OF THE COMMITTEE

2. Mr. Farhadi (Afghanistan) was elected Vice-Chairman.

3. Mr. Cassar (Malta) was elected Rapporteur.

REPORT BY THE VICE-CHAIRMAN ON THE UNITED NATIONS NORTH AMERICAN SEMINAR AND NGO SYMPOSIUM ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE HELD AT NEW YORK FROM 28 JUNE TO 2 JULY 1993

4. Mr. HIDALGO BASULTO (Cuba), reporting on the Ninth United Nations North American Regional Seminar and the Tenth United Nations North American Regional NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, held at Headquarters from 28 June to 2 July 1993, said that the Seminar had focused on the theme of priorities for United Nations action. Questions of human rights, economic development and the peace process had been considered in three separate panels. In a departure from earlier practice, each panel had been moderated by an expert, and, rather than a final document, a report summarizing the proceedings would be issued.

5. The panel on human rights had focused on the relationship between promoting the peace process and guaranteeing human rights. There had been support for the inclusion of human rights in the agenda of the multilateral peace talks, and for the protection of human rights independently of the peace process. In that connection working groups of fact-finding missions could be established, either by the Security Council or by the parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention.

6. The panel on economic development had focused on making international assistance more effective and responsive to Palestinian needs. The panel had concluded that the Organization could provide vital assistance in a number of areas relating to planning, administration, education and infrastructural development.

7. The panel on the peace process had agreed that the role of the United Nations in that process would expand, and that once a peace agreement was concluded the Organization would play an essential role in its implementation. The panel had expressed the view that the new United States Administration had displayed new sensitivity towards the peace talks and the role of the United Nations.

8. At the Symposium, four panels and a number of workshops had focused on a range of issues relating to the peace negotiations, human rights violations in the occupied territories, the status of Palestinian refugees and the role of non-governmental organizations in alleviating the suffering of the Palestinian people. In a new approach, six standing committees had met to discuss ways and means of coordinating NGO efforts to assist the Palestinian people. The

(Mr. Hidalgo Basulto, Cuba)

Symposium had recommended the convening of a special symposium on Jerusalem during the coming year, and had elected new members to the North American Coordinating Committee for Non-Governmental Organizations on the Question of Palestine (NACC). A final report would be issued in due course.

EUROPEAN NGO SYMPOSIUM AND INTERNATIONAL NGO MEETING ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE TO BE HELD AT VIENNA FROM 23 TO 27 AUGUST 1993

9. The CHAIRMAN said that the Government of Austria had agreed to provide the Austria Centre free of charge for the symposium and international meeting to be held at Vienna from 23 to 27 August 1993.

AFRICAN REGIONAL SEMINAR AND NGO SYMPOSIUM ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE TO BE HELD AT DAKAR, SENEGAL, FROM 30 AUGUST TO 3 SEPTEMBER 1993

10. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the provisional programme for the African Regional Seminar and Non-Governmental Organization Symposium on the Question of Palestine to be held at Dakar, Senegal, from 30 August to 3 September 1993. He would take it that the Committee wished to approve the provisional programme.

11. It was so decided.

OTHER MATTERS

12. Mr. AL-KIDWA (Observer for Palestine), in commenting on recent political developments from his delegation's perspective, recalled that the outcome of the ninth round of the bilateral peace talks being held in Washington had proved disappointing. The goal of the tenth round had been the deciding of negotiating principles by the delegations of Palestine and Israel. Near the end of that round, the United States of America had submitted a paper that, in the view of his delegation, represented a total abandonment, even a violation, of the letter of assurances from the United States Government to Palestine received before the Madrid talks. For example, with regard to the issue of territorial jurisdiction, an attempt had been made to change the status under international law from an occupied territory to a territory under dispute. On the issue of Jerusalem, the Western media had inaccurately reported that Palestine had insisted on negotiating the final status of Jerusalem; in reality, it had accepted the negotiation of the final status of the occupied territories including Jerusalem. According to the proposals in the United States paper, however, greater Jerusalem would be excluded from any transitional arrangements, and Palestine was expected to recognize it as part of Israeli territory. Such a position was unacceptable to his delegation; Jerusalem could not be excluded from the final stage of negotiation, and Arab and Islamic as well as Christian rights to the city must be recognized. His delegation urged all parties to adhere to the Security Council position on Jerusalem.

13. The situation had worsened sharply and had reached an impasse because of the position of the United States Administration. His delegation called on the United States to express its commitment to the letter of assurances in order to open a way for positive developments. The Palestinian delegation reaffirmed its

(Mr. Al-Kidwa, Observer, Palestine)

commitment to the peace process, but failure by the United States and Israel to do so in turn would have serious consequences that would be difficult to foresee.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.